



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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Nez-Lizer order flags to be flown at half-staff in honor of Navajo Code Talker and New Mexico State Senator John Pinto

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer issued a proclamation on Tuesday, honoring and recognizing the late Navajo Code Talker and New Mexico State Sen. Dr. John Pinto, who passed away on May 24 at the age of 94. The proclamation orders all flags on the Navajo Nation to be flown at half-staff on May 29 to 30, in honor and remembrance of his service to the Navajo people and the State of New Mexico.

Sen. Pinto was Díbétzhíí (Black Sheep Clan) and born for the Táchii'nii (Red Running into the Water People Clan). He was born on December 15, 1924, and was originally from Lupton, Ariz.

“On behalf of the Navajo people, we continue to offer our condolences and prayers for his children, grandchildren, friends, and colleagues. Senator Pinto devoted his life to public service and helping our communities. There is no doubt that he changed the lives of so many people for the better. We will miss his smile, his humor, and his love and compassion that he shared with us all,” said President Nez.

Sen. Pinto served in the U.S. Marine Corps as a Navajo Code Talker during World War II. He was a national hero, veteran, and a great Diné leader who made tremendous sacrifices and contributions for the Navajo people.

Following his military service, Senator Pinto returned home and began his duties as a public servant for 42 years as a member of the New Mexico State Senate beginning in 1977, making him the longest-serving legislator in state history. Navajo Technical University honored Sen. Pinto with its very first honorary doctoral degree for public service during a commencement ceremony held on May 17.

“Senator Pinto’s sacrifices to protect and serve the Navajo Nation and the United States will forever be cherished and remembered. We are truly thankful to his family for sharing his life with us and the entire country,” said Vice President Lizer.

Sen. Pinto will be escorted by the Navajo Police Department, New Mexico State Police, and the Navajo Hopi Honor Riders from Gallup to Santa Fe, where he will lay in state at the New Mexico

State Capitol Rotunda beginning at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 29. A funeral service is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, beginning at 11:00 a.m. at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, 415 E. Green Ave., in Gallup, N.M. A reception will follow at Red Rock State Park in Gallup N.M.

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